

THE WHITE HOUSE

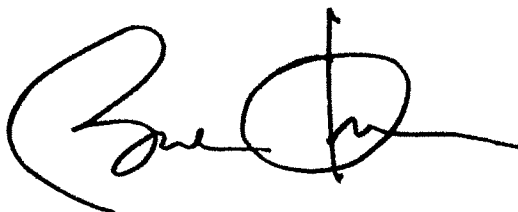
WASHINGTON

April 2, 2009

It is with profound commitment to Americans with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), their families, and their communities that I join in celebrating World Autism Day. We celebrate the contributions of individuals with autism, their families, and self-advocates across the World.

We must build a world free of unnecessary barriers, stereotypes, and discrimination. Policies must be developed, attitudes must be shaped, and we must ensure that everyone has the chance to live independently as full citizens in their communities. For too long, the needs of people and families living with autism have gone unrecognized and underappreciated. That is why my Administration supports increased funding for autism research, treatment, screenings, public awareness, and services for ASD. We must also remember that children with autism become adults with autism who deserve our support, our respect, and the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

As we celebrate World Autism Day, let us recommit ourselves to this cause and to the responsibility we have to support those with ASD and their families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", with a large, stylized initial "B" and a circular flourish.